

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PHNOM 06589 101413Z

47

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 OPR-02 NIC-01 SAJ-01 DRC-01 /099 W

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R 101335Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6075

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

CINCPAC

COMUSSAG

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 6589

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS/ PINS PINT CB

SUBJECT: RENEWED TEACHER/STUDENT ANTI-GOVERNMENT ACTIVISM

1. SUMMARY: AFTER A MONTH'S RESPITE TEACHERS AND STUDENTS RESUMED ANTI-GOVERNMENT ACTIVISM THIS WEEK AS MAJOR LYCEES UNFURLED BANNERS ATTACKING THE GOVERNMENT ON ECONOMICS SPECIFICALLY AND FOR INCOMPETENCY IN GENERAL. WHILE SOME TEACHERS ARE STRIKING, OTHERS ARE WORKING OVERTIME TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR EXAMS. LARGER DEMONSTRATIONS ARE REPORTEDLY SCHEDULED FOR THE MAY 15-17 PERIOD. END SUMMARY.

2. ON MAY 6 LYCEES, 18 MARCH, DAUN PENH, AND JEUNESSE DE SAUVETAGE STOPPED TEACHING FOR THE MORNING TO UNFURL BANNERS ATTACKING THE GOVERNMENT ON ECONOMIC ISSUES. TYPICAL OF THE THEMES DISPLAYED WERE: "CORRUPTION AND INCOMPETENCY LEAD TO FAMINE," "SALARIES MUST RISE WITH PRICES," AND "IF ECONOMIC PROBLEMS ARE NOT SOLVED BY MAY 17, TEACHERS WILL WITHDRAW CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT," SOME TEACHERS SUBSEQUENTLY REFUSED TO RETURN TO WORK, AND AS

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PAGE 02 PHNOM 06589 101413Z

OF MAY 9, PART OF THE TEACHING STAFF OF NINE LYCEES WERE

ON STRIKE. AT LYCEE DAUN PENH, ON THE OTHER HAND, TEACHERS ARE WORKING OVERTIME TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR BACCALAUREAT EXAMS.

3. SECONDAY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (AEES) PRESIDENT IE POLY TOLD OUR LOCAL POLITICAL ASSISTANT THAT THE RADICAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (AEREK) CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLANS A MEETING MAY 17 AND ADDED THAT MORE BANNERS WILL COME OUT AT THE FACULTY OF LETTERS ON MAY 15. OTHER REPORTS, INCLUDING ONE FROM THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, HAVE DEMONSTRATIONS SCHEDULED FOR MAY 17.

4. COMMENT. THESE PROTESTS MARK THE END OF THE ONE MONTH GRACE PERIOD THAT THE APRIL 5 GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF TEACHERS GAVE THE GOVERNMENT TO IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC SITUATION. ALTHOUGH THE STATED ISSUE IS ECONOMIC, OTHER AS YET ILL-DEFINED THREADS ARE TIED INTO THE RESURGENCE OF TEACHER/STUDENT PROTESTS INCLUDING COMMUNIST INTRIGUE AND PERHAPS EFFORTS BY AMBITIOUS POLITICIANS TO FORCE A CABINET RESHUFFLE. I WILL BE DISCUSSING THIS PROBLEM WITH PRIME MINISTER LONG BORET THIS EVENING.

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Message Attributes

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